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NOVEMBER—DECEMBER, 1905.

[The Editor, whilst grateful to all correspondents who may be kind enough to furnish him with information, desires to state that he is not responsible for the views stated by them, nor for quotations which may be inserted from other journals. The object of the REPORTER is to spread information, and articles are necessarily quoted which may contain views or statements for which their authors can alone be held responsible.]

Chinese Labour in the Transvaal.

THE following reply was received from the Colonial Office to the letter which was forwarded on behalf of the Society in October :—

DOWNING STREET,
9th November, 1905.

SIR,—I am directed by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 7th of October last on the subject of the employment of Chinese coolies in the mines of the Transvaal, in which you express the views of your Committee (1) that the labourers have good reason to be dissatisfied with the treatment which they receive and are doing all they can to escape from it, and (2) that the present situation is one fraught with grave danger to the community, and state that your Committee urge that the whole question may be reconsidered by the Government in the new light thrown upon it by recent events, and hope that the importation may now be limited pending the decision of the Transvaal people themselves upon the Chinese labour policy.

Mr. Lyttelton is glad to observe that your Committee make no complaint of the feeding and housing and general treatment of the coolies, but, with regard to your reference to confinement in the compounds, I am to state that it was never from the first proposed that they should be confined to compounds, but only to the mining premises in which they were working, premises ranging, as Mr. Lyttelton understands, from 300 to 1,200 acres.

In regard to the difficulties which have arisen Mr. Lyttelton is informed by the Governor that they may be ascribed to three causes—the bad character of a small percentage of the coolies themselves—the improper exercise of authority by individual white men put over them—and lastly, but chiefly, misunderstandings due to the fact that the Chinese do not talk the English language and so few Englishmen talk Chinese.

Measures have been taken to remove all these causes of trouble. There has not yet been time for these measures to have their full effect, but Lord

Selborne states that he believes that the second cause of trouble has already been eradicated. Further, the specific allegations of abuses of this nature in the past are being made, at Mr. Lyttelton's request, the subject of a searching investigation by the Governor.

Lord Selborne is informed that when native labour was first brought to the Witwatersrand similar trouble was experienced, that disorder among the natives was great, thefts, riots, assaults and murders were common, and great anxiety was felt as to the results of the experiment of bringing so large a number of labourers together. The experience and good management which have been so effective in removing discontent and establishing order among the natives may reasonably be expected to have like results as regards the Chinese.

As a matter of fact the significance of recent events has perhaps not unnaturally been exaggerated. The Attorney-General of the Transvaal stated in a recent debate in the Legislative Council that the convictions of Chinese for any offence which might be called serious amounted to about one-seventh of one per cent. of the Chinese labour population, and that according to his calculation there were about 1,400 who had deserted since the importation began (nearly 18 months ago). On the 3rd September last, out of 45,000 coolies only 275, or eleven-eightieths of one per cent. were found to be absent, and of this number 129 had been reported as found and accounted for within five days.

In the circumstances above stated Mr. Lyttelton does not consider that the time has arrived for a reconsideration of the whole question of the importation of Chinese coolie labour, especially as that question is one for the decision of the elected Legislative Assembly of the Transvaal, which, it is anticipated, will meet early in the ensuing year, and whose constitution will ensure an authoritative pronouncement of British and Dutch of all classes.

Mr. Lyttelton has so frequently replied in the House of Commons to such allegations as those in the first paragraph of your letter that he does not deem it necessary to say more than that the view expressed, if consistently maintained, goes to the root of a long and widely-established system of indentured Asiatic labour, which has proved of great benefit to several British Colonies and to the Asiatics themselves, which has been sanctioned and countenanced by both parties in the State, and with which no responsible person has, it is believed, ever proposed to interfere.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) FRED. GRAHAM.

The Secretary,
British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society.

Since the above was received, we have seen that an influentially signed letter on the same subject was sent to the late Prime Minister by Mr. Herbert Samuel, M.P., in which was quoted a statement of Mr. Balfour's made in the House of Commons on the 14th February to the effect that "the Chinese experiment is being most carefully watched," and if it were found that the immigration of the coolies was, on the whole, producing a balance of evil, the Government would "without hesitation prevent any augmentation of their numbers."

The writers of the letter contend that recent events have made a balance of evil clearly manifest, and urge the ending of the experiment in conformity with "the evident desire of the great majority of the nation, of the majority also of the self-governing Colonies."

The letter goes on:—

"A Transvaal official return shows that, up to July 31st, 1905, there had been 1,735 convictions for desertions, in addition to 21,205 cases of 'unlawful absence from work,' which did not lead to prosecutions. By that date, no fewer than 2,342 coolies had been sent to prison, almost all for striking work, for rioting, or for escaping from the mines; 668 were sentenced to imprisonment in the month of July alone."

As regards the shortage of labour, the writers point out that the 30,000 Kaffirs, who were said to have fallen off since the war, have now been obtained, and that the number of white men has not increased proportionately with that of coloured labourers, for while between May, 1904, and September, 1905, coloured labour increased by 83 per cent., white labour only increased by 35 per cent.

"In the opinion of competent observers it is rather to the encouragement of Kaffir labour, and to the larger employment of white labour, that the Transvaal mining industry should look for an economic progress free from social dangers."

Among other representative names, this letter bears the signatures of the Bishop of Hereford, Bishop Welldon, Lord Carrington, Lady Aberdeen, Mr. John Burns, Sir T. Fowell Buxton, Dr. Clifford, Major Seely, and the Rev. F. B. Meyer.

Mr. Balfour's reply cites the same figures as those given by Mr. Lyttelton in his letter to the Anti-Slavery Society. He then goes on to state that the number of unskilled workmen has not yet reached the point indicated by the Transvaal Labour Commission as desirable, and contends that the increase of 5,000 white labourers, which has occurred since the arrival of the Chinese, could not have taken place if the mines had been limited to Kaffir labour.

The closing paragraphs of the late Prime Minister's letter are important.

"In a few months' time the Transvaal Constitution will be in operation; and the white population will have an adequate machinery for expressing their views. Should those views be in harmony with the opinion expressed in your letter, I shall gladly agree to abandon what, in the speech from which you quote, I rightly describe as an experiment. Should they, on the other hand, be favourable to the legislation now in force, I do not think they ought to be overruled from Downing Street. Those who regard the terms on which the Chinese workman is engaged as equivalent to slavery are, I admit, in a different position, and cannot be expected to take this view. They are bound to put an end to a system which, in their judgment, is inconsistent with national morality, and to do so whether the colony be willing or unwilling. But their task will be a serious one, and it will not be confined to the Transvaal. There is no distinction between the legal *status* of the indentured Asiatic labourer in that colony and his condition in other colonies. . . . The system of indentured labour, whether coolie or native, must therefore be treated as a whole; and if, indeed, those critics be right who identify it with slavery, it must ruthlessly be extirpated from every colony where it has taken its root."

As regards the parallel drawn between the Chinese Ordinance and Indentured labour ordinances in other parts of the Empire, it has been admitted by the Colonial Secretary, that the former differs in several important particulars from any other ordinance in the Crown Colonies, while Lord Stanmore, speaking from wide experience, and as one who is not opposed to Asiatic labour in general, stated last year in the House of Lords that, both in what it contained and what it omitted, the Chinese Ordinance differed in degree and principle from every other ordinance he had ever heard of.

These letters plainly showed that the late Government definitely refused either to end or to limit the importation of Chinese labourers. There is now no attempt to deny the general truth of the allegations made as to the ill-treatment of the coolies by officials in the mines, into which the Governor is stated to be making full investigation. The new summary jurisdiction is reported to be working well, but we should be inclined to look with suspicion on this administration of justice in the compounds by the mine superintendents and under the influence of the mining authorities.

As regards the figures of desertions and convictions cited by the Government, they need supplementing by those which are given in the letter to the Prime Minister above quoted. The total number of coolies convicted for any offence up to July 31st was 2,543, according to the official report of the Transvaal Attorney-General, while the number of men who had been unlawfully absent from their work up to the same date reached no less than 21,205—not much less than half the whole number of coolies employed on the Rand mines.

The Congo Question.

At last the expected Report of the Congo Commission of Inquiry, so long held back, has been published, just a year after the Commissioners landed at Boma to begin their investigations, which they completed by the middle of last February.

The document is a very long and interesting one, and it may be said that the great majority of the abuses and horrors, the report of which has scandalised Europe during the last few years, are frankly admitted, and the protests, which have been steadily growing in volume and intensity, are fully justified by this official report of King's Leopold's own Commission.*

The effect of the publication of the Report was somewhat neutralised at the first by the distribution to the British Press of a misleading résumé of the document, in which the charges brought by the Commissioners were cleverly minimised. This version seems to have been due to a mysterious body described as the "West African Missionary Association," which has been dragged from its obscurity by the researches of the *Daily Chronicle*. It is necessary, therefore, to refer to the original Report, which will repay careful study.

In its tone the Report is exceedingly guarded and shows throughout a deep reverence for "the Powers that be," nor does it venture for one moment to arraign the system on which the administration of the State is built up. Its recommendations are consequently not of a radical kind. A serious omission is the non-publication of the evidence given to the Court, or even a summary of it. More important even than these depositions, in the opinion of the Commissioners, were the political reports, the judicial *dossiers* of prosecutions, the official correspondence, etc., which were submitted to them and contributed much towards forming their conclusions; of these documents also not one is published. But perhaps the suppression of all these materials for forming a judgment on the case is more significant of the true state of things than if they had been made public.

The Report deals with the charges under eight headings, viz. :—

1. Land legislation and freedom of trade.
2. The system of labour taxation and abuses arising from forced labour.
3. Military expeditions—hostages—mutilations.
4. The system of concessions.
5. Depopulation.
6. Tutelage exercised over destitute children.
7. The recruiting of soldiers and labourers.
8. The administration of justice.

On the first subject the Commission concedes the theory of the right of the State to appropriate vacant lands, but remarks that much turns on the

* A translation has been published, with comments, by the Congo Reform Association, Liverpool. Price 3d.

meaning assigned to the words "vacant lands." Virtually the State has an absolute right to the whole land and can itself dispose of all the produce. The system restricts the activity of the natives, and places the people at the mercy of local agents who prevent them from moving, or even from visiting other villages than their own without special permission. The question of freedom of trade, in relation to the Berlin Act, the Commission declines to discuss as being outside its province, but it states that there is practically no trade among the natives, and although freedom of trade is formally recognised, the native for the most part "does not own the objects which constitute trade."

With regard to the system of labour taxes the Commission begins by admitting the necessity of forced labour to get the idle native to develop the country, and considers that the labour tax, which takes the place of the necessity of earning a livelihood in civilised countries, is therefore justified. Having made this concession to the existing system the Report goes on to say that the labour tax, like all others, ought only to absorb a small part of the individual activity and ought to be reconciled as far as possible with the principle of individual freedom.

It is pointed out that a wise legislation should avoid abuses by fixing strictly and clearly the limits of the tax and the means of obtaining it, and should watch carefully that these limits are not passed.

How different from these principles the practice in the Congo State has been the Report proceeds to show. Until 1903 the regulation of the requisitions from the natives was left to agents. Every *chef de poste* or head of a factory claimed native *prestations* as he would, and no control was exercised over these demands; latterly the district Commissioners fixed taxes of very various amounts according to local circumstances. The demands were sometimes fair enough, but often they were excessive; many agents only thought of getting as much as possible in the shortest time—all depended on the individual agent, who had a direct interest in the amount collected. So also in regard to the remuneration given to the native labourers, certain principles were laid down by the Government but were not applied. Sometimes the natives were paid in worthless goods. There were no rules as to the means of coercing the natives, and acts of violence of a more or less serious nature were the natural result, some of which are set out in the Report. The Government, it says, did little more than remind the agents that they ought to treat the natives with humanity and equity.

In November, 1903, a law was passed fixing 40 hours a month as the amount of labour to be exacted from every adult native. But the time in most cases was estimated by the amount of produce thought to be equivalent to 40 hours' work, so that a different amount was arrived at by various loose methods in different districts. Moreover, a circular issued by the Governor-

General in 1904 announced that not only must former results be kept up but there must be a constant increase! Such instructions, the Commissioners point out, were bound to have the effect of preventing the district Commissioners from reducing excessive impositions.

The 40 hours' law is thus merely a law on paper, and its observance is reduced to a farce.

It also left the question of the application of force quite vague and undetermined.

The Report then gives in considerable detail examples of the way in which impositions, such as the "bread tax," exacted from the natives around Leopoldville to feed the Administration, are carried out. The inhabitants of the neighbouring villages have to bring in the food-stuffs, 16, 25, or 40 miles, according to the zone in which they live, and the work is transformed into "a veritable *corvée*," continuous and admitting of no rest, either for the women who prepare the *kwanga* or the men who have to go perpetually to and fro with the supply. The statement of a missionary is quoted to the effect that if this system is carried out at Leopoldville for five years longer there will be no population left in the district. The Commissioners add that Leopoldville is only a type of all the other large stations. Other examples are given of the intolerable burden which these forced supplies of food and fish impose upon the unfortunate natives, who are liable to imprisonment and floggings in case of delay.

The Report also deals with the abuses connected with the supply of wood for fuel, which it recommends should be discontinued as an imposition, and with the work demanded on the stations, which is irregular and "almost continuous"; in one case the requisitions in this connection led to the flight of a whole village. Of all these *corvées* the Report considers the worst to be the Portage, which it describes as *écrasante*.

The rubber tax naturally receives a good deal of attention in the Report, which explains the peculiar hardships connected with rubber gathering, taking up nearly all the time of the labourer and thus constituting another flagrant violation of the 40 hours' law. The amount now demanded is a maximum and is in general exaggerated; to make the exaction more tolerable, rubber should be demanded less frequently and the necessary changes of place should be counted in the labourer's time. The force which is necessary to make the natives work rubber has been exercised in different ways, such as the detention of chiefs and the taking of hostages, who are often women, the institution of sentries, and fines and military expeditions. This detention is sometimes prolonged for several months, and grave acts of violence, including floggings with the *chicotte*, have been committed.

The Commissioners aver that things, when they were there, were much

better in the "Domaine de la Couronne" than they had been, but there was no improvement in the Abir and other Companies' districts, in which such abuses and brutalities were the rule.

Of the outrages committed by native sentries the Report speaks strongly, describing the "caractère funeste de l'institution," which they say frankly ought to be suppressed. The abuses, of which evidence was given to the Commission, were appallingly numerous, and the agents present did not even attempt to deny the charges.

The Commissioners, as we have seen, declare that forced labour is a necessity. At the same time they say that the greatest tolerance should be shown in applying the law of imposed labour, and the use of force will often lead to untoward results. The negro, they rather sententiously affirm, can only be habituated to work slowly and progressively. The right to employ force must only be used at the last extremity, for a violent régime defeats its own object, because it drives away the native. Agents should set their faces against the employment of force, and should be content with little when more can only be got by forcible means. The Commission advises the State to favour the patient, moderate and tactful officials who have won the confidence of the population, and recommends that the Companies shall be deprived of the power of coercion.

As to the punitive expeditions, the Report declares that they have been wrongfully employed, bearing the character of warlike operations, and resulting in unjustifiable murders. It has not been uncommon for commercial agents to go out with armed natives and make war on the people merely because they were short in their taxes. There is deplorable confusion in the Upper Congo, we are told, between a state of war and a state of peace, between administration and repression. Things, however, are said to have improved.

The mutilations which have been complained of have chiefly been committed on these armed expeditions, and the Commission holds that the mutilation of dead bodies is an ancient custom, which is hard to eradicate. They believe that when soldiers have mutilated the living it has been from cupidity, or with the mistaken idea that their victims were dead.

THE CONCESSIONS SYSTEM.

The Commission holds that the worst abuses have been committed in the territories of the Concessionaire Companies, in which the State receives half the shares in the Company in exchange for the grant of the right of exploitation. The Commissioners do not condemn the system, which they consider necessary, but—

"It is the way in which the Companies have employed their right of coercion that is the source of the great majority of the abuses proved to exist in their territory. Concessionaire Companies, by the very fact that they are

traders, have profits in view and not any humanitarian or civilising end. We can at once see the disadvantages which may result from the double capacity of their officers. These are at once commercial agents, eager for gain, stimulated by considerable premiums, and, to a certain degree, officials also, since they are charged with collecting the taxes. Then it must not be forgotten that for many years the amount of the tax was not fixed by law, and it was in reality the officials themselves who determined it. This vague character of the tax in kind still lasts under the decree of the 19th November, 1903. In fact, as we have said, each native is assessed at a maximum amount which is never reached, and which leaves a considerable margin for the demands of the agents. As the higher officials and the Company Directors receive on the amount of rubber collected still higher profits than their subordinates, we cannot be surprised if they exert a serious control over the actions of these latter."

The control of the State in these territories is said to be quite insufficient and in urgent need of reinforcement. In all the Abir territory there is only one State agent, a police officer, who has never reported any illegality, and whose role is confined to suppressing native opposition to the Company's agents and to bringing back refractory villages to work.

Magistrates have only three times gone into the Concession to make investigations, and they have had to travel on the Company's boats, and were even sometimes dependent on accepting the hospitality of the agents into whose conduct they were inquiring.

It will be seen from these criticisms that the Report has not hesitated to condemn the working of the Concessionaire system, and it makes a number of recommendations with a view to depriving the Companies of their ill-used powers and reducing the evils to a maximum. The State should exercise strict surveillance over the Companies, should itself appoint tribunals, and organise public works. If abuses do not cease, the Commissioners recommend that the power of collecting taxes should be taken away from the Companies. They even go so far as to propose that the State should, as an experiment, give up its rights to the produce in one or more rubber districts and allow traders to deal directly with the natives. The result of such an experiment might furnish useful data for the future.

Dealing with the recruiting of soldiers and labourers, the Report declares its belief that the military education has been a great civilising force. But abuses have occurred in engaging workmen for State purposes, who are in reality impressed, and have no knowledge of the conditions of labour. The contract, if drawn at all, is a mere form, and chiefs are made to supply labourers as they do soldiers. Forced labour is the rule for great enterprises like the construction of a railway; on the railway at Stanleyville 3,000 men were found at work, of whom only a few had a regular contract. The villages of labourers are not satisfactory from the sanitary and other points of view, and punishments are excessive.

Under the heading of the Administration of Justice, the Commission refers to some flagrant abuses, such as the centralisation at Boma, the fewness of the judges and the dependence of the deputy judges (*substituts*) on the administrative authority. On the first matter, to which attention has so often been called by the missionaries, the Report has the following passage :—

“ The numerous deaths have made a deep impression on the natives. The very name of Boma frightens them. Also in many districts of the Congo, it is at the present time very difficult, not to say impossible, to get the blacks to come and give evidence before the Courts. The inhabitants of the Upper Congo, who is called as a witness escapes into the forest or the bush. He has to be treated as a prisoner, hunted down, put in chains sometimes, and in every case, force has to be used in order to bring him from his village to where the Court is sitting. . . . It often happens that the native who has suffered wrong, rather than undergo the dangers and fatigues of a journey to Boma, refuses to make any complaint. Infractions of the law remain unattended to, abuses multiply, the discontent of the population increases, and sometimes shows itself suddenly in acts of violence and revolts, which the intervention of justice might have succeeded in preventing.”

The lack of magistrates causes the natives to apply to missionaries and declare their grievances to them. Hence, the “astonishing influence” of the missionaries in certain districts, as they become, to the native, “the sole representatives of equity and justice.”

If white men, instead of being isolated and far from any controlling authority, so as to be sometimes almost assured of impunity, had always the fear of the magistrate before their eyes, many “regrettable incidents” would not occur. Very often, the Commission found, proceedings, which were set on foot by *substituts* against whites accused of maltreating natives have been dropped owing to administrative decision.

The Report lays stress on the necessity that all the judges should be absolutely independent of the executive, and they consider it to be vitally important that, as many of the laws are applied in a necessarily imperfect way, an independent authority should see they are carried out.

Another abuse which is referred to under this head, is the detention as “political prisoners” of natives who have not paid their taxes, or, who have sheltered fugitives or defaulters. These persons, whose imprisonment has nothing to do with politics, are often confined for months together and treated as criminals.

The Report, as we have seen, constitutes an indictment of the gravest kind on the maladministration and abuses which have made the Congo State notorious, and is most valuable as a justification of the charges which have for years past been brought against Congo rule, and of the action which has been taken by our Government to draw the attention of the Powers to it.

We have not quoted the eulogistic passages, in which the State is praised for having introduced security and the benefits of civilisation into the heart of Africa, because these are in common form and are rather meaningless beside the tremendous accusations which the Report has been obliged to submit. Nor have we quoted, at any length, the recommendations of the Commission which, whatever value they may have, are merely palliatives, not touching the system which we believe to be at the root of the whole mischief. So long as the system of administration, built up by the Sovereign of the Congo State, and founded on forced labour—which is recognised by the Commission—is continued, it is useless, we believe, to make proposals whereby its incidents might be mitigated.

We regret to see that a Commission has been appointed by King Leopold, to study the conclusions of the Report and formulate proposals, which consist chiefly of men closely connected with the Concessionaire Companies and with the Congo Administration, who may be trusted to do as little as possible to interfere with the existing state of things.



The Slave Trade in West Central Africa.

Mr. H. W. Nevinson continues his disclosures of "The Slave Trade of To-day" in the November and December issues of *Harper's Magazine*.

In the former article he describes his march through "the Hungry Country," that strange, ill-defined frontier tract lying between Angola and North-West Rhodesia, which, according to the recent award of the King of Italy, has been adjudged to remain Portuguese territory. The "hungry country" stretches from the River Cuanza eastward nearly to the Portuguese fort of Mashiko, about 250 miles, but its breadth from north to south is uncertain, as also is the reason for its character. The district is well watered, and though the soil is sandy and bitter it is not abandoned by wild animals, and until within a few years was inhabited. Now it is utterly abandoned, and Mr. Nevinson can only repeat the native belief that the land is accursed.

The main slave-trade route which Mr. Nevinson followed lies through this grim country. Everywhere he saw gruesome and unmistakable marks of the trade, though he himself did not meet any actual slave gangs chained together of the kind which almost every traveller along the route had described to him. For this he assigns more than one reason—the time of year, the care exercised by the traders to avoid meeting an Englishman, and the use of unknown slave paths lying north of the main route. Moreover, the object of his journey was somehow found out by a leading slave dealer, who put traders specially on their guard. He also believes that things are

changed for the better since the native Bailundu war of 1902, and that the old caravan system has been reduced in consequence.

"The horrors of the road have certainly become less in the last three years since the rebellion of 1902. Rebellion is always good. It always implies an unendurable wrong. It is the only shock that ever stirs the self-complacency of officials. . . . The shock to public feeling in Portugal owing to the Bailundu war and its revelations—the disgrace of certain officers at the forts, who were convicted of taking a percentage of slaves from the passing caravans as hush money—the strong action of Captain Amorim in trying to suppress the whole traffic—the instructions to the forts to allow no chained gangs to pass—all these things have, I believe, acted as a check upon the old-fashioned methods."

But this is the best that can be said. The sights which Mr. Nevinson saw on his route were such as to chill the blood and make the heart stand still with horror, and if things now are better than they were they must have been terrible indeed. Near the Cuanza, where the hungry country begins, there are slave shackles hanging thick on the trees and bushes, shackles for hands or feet, and they may be seen scattered along the whole length of the district. Each shackle is said to represent the death of a slave, but this can hardly be literally true, else the trade could not possibly pay. Shackles are also found on roads nearer the coast, though not so many of them as in the interior.

But besides shackles, dead men's bones strew the path. These are those of slaves (which are never buried) who, if they cannot keep up with the gang are murdered or left to die. Mr. Nevinson saw no distinct evidences of torture, such as he heard of from Englishmen who passed over the route four years ago, but all the bones were those of slaves either actually killed by violence (as the sharp-cut hole in the skull proved), or, in any case, torn from their homes and sold to traders for labour in Angola or in San Thomé. One corpse which lay near to the path was that of a man murdered within a month or so, who the carriers explained was "a slave who broke down with the usual shivering fever on the road and was killed with an axe because he could go no farther."

Slaves are said to be sent down now in smaller gangs and with more concealment, for the sake of respectability. One such group of 24 men and boys were met by Mr. Nevinson's caravan, hidden in the bush. On seeing him they ran away, leaving their loads and whips behind them, while a man was posted on a tree to watch his movements. Another party, which was at once declared by the native carriers to be a slave gang, numbered 78, nearly all of them being boys under 14.

Another reason which Mr. Nevinson mentions for the reduction of the old caravan system is the opposition of the Belgians to the entrance of traders into the Congo State, "partly because guns and powder are the usual

exchange for slaves, partly because they wish to retain the natives under their own tender mercies." Rubber has become almost as lucrative as man. But the traffic, which almost ceased after the rebellion of 1902, has now begun again and is rapidly increasing. Government agents have been urged to press on the supply, and the prospect is not encouraging to opponents of slavery.

The export now averages about 4,000 head a year (not including babies) and is gradually rising. Since the rebellion there are fewer cruelties, and the new regulations of January, 1903, aim at least at tempering the worst abuses, though "their most important provisions are invariably evaded."

Mr. Nevinson thus sums up the present position:—

"The importation of slaves from the interior into Angola may not be what it was. It may not be conducted under the old methods. There is no longer that almost continuous procession of chained and tortured men and women which all travellers who crossed the hungry country before 1902 describe. . . . The traffic has been driven underground. There is now a feeling of shame and risk about it, and the military authorities dare not openly give it countenance as before. But I have never heard of any case in which they openly interfered to stop it, and the thing still goes on. It is, in fact, fast recovering from the shock of the rebellion of 1902, and is now increasing again every month."

The old slave route from Bihé to the sea is crowded with trade, rum (which is forbidden by the Brussels Act) being largely imported in exchange for rubber and beeswax.

"Down this winding track the export slaves have been driven century after century. I suppose the ancestors of half the negroes in the United States, and of nearly all in Cuba and Brazil came down it. And thousands of export slaves still come down it every year. Laws and conferences have prohibited the slave-trade for generations past, but who cares about laws and conferences as long as slavery pays and no one takes the trouble to shout?"

Agents are appointed by Government to conduct the purchase of slaves for San Thomé and Príncipe. One of them explained to Mr. Nevinson in defence of the Government that they "redeemed" the slaves, and turned them into "contract labourers." But everyone knows full well that but for these purchases by Government agents the whole slave traffic would go to pieces, and the "contracted labourers" are slaves in all but name. The business is an exceedingly lucrative one both for the "philanthropic" Government and for the large bodies of natives who hire themselves out as a kind of middlemen to take part in fights between tribes who are at war, on condition of selling the captives of one side to the other.

The majority of slaves are still brought down the old Benguela route which Mr. Nevinson took, but there is another northerly route which leads to the coast at Novo Redondo, on which the slaves are said to be worse

treated and more frequently shackled than on the Benguela path. Not far from the coast Mr. Nevinson met a procession of 43 "voluntary labourers" on their way to the Emigration Agent and San Thomé. Four armed natives marched with them ready to shoot down any runaway. Among them was a woman with whom, as she waited for the gang a few days before, Mr. Nevinson had had some conversation. She had come from far beyond the Hungry Country, and had been taken away from her husband and three children and sold to a white man for twenty cartridges. She did not know where she was going but supposed it was to Okalunga—a name which to natives may mean either the abyss of death, the abyss of the sea, or—San Thomé.

It is by means like this, says the writer, that "the islands of San Thomé and Príncipe have been rendered about the most profitable bits of the earth's surface."

We see that Mr. F. S. Arnot, the well-known missionary in West Central Africa, who speaks from a wide experience, has recently stated at a missionary conference at Bolton that in the Bihé district, notwithstanding the Brussels Convention shutting out the liquor trade from the natives, where twenty years ago there were two distilleries, to-day there are twenty, and the people are saturated with rum. He went on to say that hand in hand with this drink traffic runs slave trading in a worse form than ever before. A large Jewish firm of Portuguese traders carry on a regular traffic in slaves which they purchase for kegs of rum. It was a common sight to-day to see strings of shackled slaves purchased from the natives being taken away to the coast to be shipped to where the traders know there is a market for them—"and all this in face of civilisation and in face of treaties."

Telegrams to Lisbon at the end of October from Portuguese West Africa reported fighting with the natives in the neighbourhood of the Cunene River and at Quissongo, in which "many of the enemy (natives) were killed and wounded and a number were taken prisoners." The Portuguese are reported to have been successful.

IN REMOTEST BAROTSELAND.

Of this present-day slave trading in the hinterland of Angola there is a striking account given by Colonel Harding, Acting Administrator of North-Western Rhodesia, who has recently published an account of his travels in 1900 (to which we have already more than once referred in the *Reporter*), in a book bearing the above title. Colonel Harding's journey included the discovery of the sources of the Zambesi in the north, and extended as far as Bihé in the west. He constantly refers in the record of his travels to the slave caravans and slave raiders whom he met with, and the signs of the trade, such as slave yokes and sticks, and deserted villages. More than once he writes of the trees being literally hung with shackles.

We need not quote these passages at length, some of which were brought to the attention of Lord Lansdowne in a recent letter of the Aborigines Protection Society. West of Mashiko three slave trading caravans were met in two days, carrying guns, calico or powder, the half-caste or Bihean traders marching in the rear. One of these Colonel Harding describes as having "rascality written on every line of his face." These scoundrels travel with their women and "regard the whole game as a picnic." Colonel Harding had the same experience near Nyakatoro. On more than one occasion the party had difficulty in dealing with the natives who could not get rid of the idea that they were Portuguese, in quest of slaves, and in many places the natives are in a constant state of armed resistance. When engaging carriers at Nyakatoro the first question asked was "Will you leave us to die if we get sick?" showing plainly the sort of treatment that was common.

At Nyakatoro, where he stayed with the missionaries, Colonel Harding records a meeting with a Mr. Bricker, "a typical American miner," who gave a most interesting account of his journey with a waggon and oxen from Mossamedes. "But," the author writes,—

"The results of the slave trade, which at every point met his view, were too horrifying and inhuman to realise, unless seen. The path, so he informed me, was strewn with the bodies of victims heaped by the roadside; men too old to carry their burdens, sank down, never to rise again. Children, too young to endure the heat of the tropical sun, are relieved of their sufferings by a stroke of the slave driver's axe, their flesh left as food for hungry wolves. Such was the sad and terrible evidence of Mr. Bricker, who had no reason to invent and no object in misleading. . . . Such tales could be multiplied by many of those who have witnessed the horrors of this traffic in human bodies, and are often too gruesome in detail to be dwelt upon."

In the latter part of the book Colonel Harding describes a journey which he took to the source of Kabompo River, which was not then known. His reason for undertaking the journey was that King Lewanika was greatly disturbed by rumours of slave-trading by Mombari (West Coast slave traders) in those parts. On the way, besides necessary carriers and guides, etc., Colonel Harding's caravan was joined by "a following of several hundred natives, husbands looking for their wives, mothers looking for their sons, and children looking for their parents—who had been stolen and sold for slaves." Colonel Harding restored a number of these people to their respective owners, and inflicted punishment on a noted slave trader at Kasempa, storming his kraal and burning his belongings. From this place, which is 250 miles north-west of the capital of Barotseland, the way led through a country, which he describes as "nearly denuded of natives by slave raiders."



Northern Nigeria.

PARLIAMENTARY PAPER.*

THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S Annual Report for 1904, published at the end of November last, is of considerable length, as it gives the result of his own inspection of provinces on a tour which covered a distance of over 2,000 miles by land and over 1,600 by water. Sir F. Lugard has himself referred us to this Report for information on what has been achieved in the Protectorate in regard to slavery. We therefore quote his remarks under this head almost in full:—

SLAVERY.

"The general position of the slave question in the Protectorate may be said to be satisfactory. The constant slave-raids which have depopulated the country and almost exterminated the people of the Kabba and Kontagora provinces have, of course, ceased throughout the length and breadth of Nigeria. The slave trade from German Adamawa and the Benue regions towards Lagos and Southern Nigeria still exists, and has been very active of late owing to the famine, but is being energetically stamped out, as many as 200 having been detected and liberated by Mr. Lobb in 2½ months. The children rescued were extremely emaciated, and had been sold for sums varying from 1s. 9d. in corn to 10s. in salt. Some were repatriated, but those whose homes could not be found, or who would probably be sold again, were sent to the Home. Out of 200 only 10 per cent. were adults, the average age being eight years; 30 or 40 died of the starvation they had suffered, in spite of every possible care. This slave trade is chiefly carried on by Nupe and Kakanda canoe-men. Seven hundred slaves have been freed in this (Muri) province during the past five years. Mr. Lobb reports that natives state that slaves are still sold openly in the markets of the Kameruns, in spite of the presence of Europeans, while large raiding bands from Gashaka (German) devastate the country, one district being raided three times in the year and completely depopulated.

"The pagan tribes, who formerly feared to bring their produce to the markets lest they should be seized as slaves, now know that they have redress from Government, and already the complaints of the Yergums have led to conviction of kidnappers at Yellua. The result will be to stimulate trade, and to exert a civilising effect on the tribes. From Bornu the Resident writes: 'The big slave traffic which was flourishing two years ago is now almost stamped out. The passage through Bornu of caravans of raw slaves from German and French territory is no longer to be found. A few very small parties occasionally still filter through with a good deal of risk and by bush routes. The chief remaining route at present is from German territory, along the western shores of Chad to Kabi, in French Manga. These traders are very difficult to catch.' 754 slaves have been freed in Bornu since the province was occupied. . . . What trade still exists comes chiefly from Adamawa. In the Yola province 154 were liberated (total 349 in three years). . . . Famine caused the sale of children, who else were dying of starvation. Mr. Barclay reports that few of the slaves of the Fulani assert their freedom, for they are now better treated by their masters, who fear lest they should do so.

* Cd. 2684-22.

"Elsewhere in the Fulani States the policy of Government in this matter is, I think, becoming better understood, and the chiefs appear to acquiesce in it. In my last report I said that the Emir of Sokoto had of his own initiative promulgated the prohibition regarding slave-dealing. From Kano it is reported that 'complaints or assertion of freedom by slaves are extremely rare—a discontented slave simply runs away and the remainder are content.' There are (says Dr. Cargill) but few cases of slave-dealing, which is becoming too risky to be profitable, and will soon cease entirely. Domestic slaves are well treated, well housed, and well fed, and the laws are now so well known that masters dare not ill-treat their slaves lest they should complain to the British Court. They are allowed to work for one day in the week on their own land, the produce of which is their own, and to trade, and may redeem themselves if they wish to. Many who ran away at the time of the annexation of Kano have returned. 'The slavery question,' he adds, 'has caused scarcely any difficulty in this province.' I observed in the list of cases (tried by himself) which the Emir sends in, that in four instances he had inflicted three months' imprisonment for buying a slave. This, I think, marks a striking forward movement. The Resident of Nassarawa states that he has now little difficulty in this question, and that the Chiefs of Nassarawa and Lafia are voluntarily freeing many of their slaves and substituting paid labour, but many runaway slaves from the north are settling in the province. From Illorin I hear that the slave trade is practically extinct, and the domestic and farm slaves are happy. The buyers of slaves are said to come from Abeokuta. A few years ago there was a great slave mart in Illorin. From Kontagora and other provinces I also hear satisfactory accounts. Even allowing for some optimism on the part of Residents, there is ground for legitimate satisfaction in contrasting this state of things with what obtained in 1900, when, as I reported, Nigeria was probably one of the worst, if not the worst, of places in Africa for slave-raiding and slave-trading in its most barbarous and cruel forms."

The list of slaves liberated in 1904 reaches a total of 564, of whom 132 returned to their relatives, 217 were sent to the Freed Slaves' Home at Zungeru, 25 to the Home at Bornu, and 128 adults were left free to follow their own inclinations.

The Home at Zungeru dealt with 401 women and children during the year (of whom three-fourths were children), a large proportion of them coming from the Muri province, where the famine caused much suffering and loss of life, great numbers of children being sold to procure a handful of food. There was a high death rate (92) in the Home during the year, accounted for by the emaciated state of the rescued children, but many hopeless cases were saved by the care and attention of the Acting Lady Superintendent.

The Home obtains a small income by the sale of bread, eggs, etc., and by laundry work, and the children are paid small wages for their work. Daily classes are held, and the boys are drilled and taught carpentering. All the clothing is made by the inmates. This Home has made great progress in 1904.

The cost of the two Freed Slaves' Homes for the year amounted to £1,466, while £45 earnings were paid to revenue.

Of the Home at Bornu Sir F. Lugard writes as follows:—

"In February, 1904, a second Home was opened in Bornu, where the large number of children liberated from slave caravans coming from Adamawa (German) might be accommodated without undergoing the hardships of a journey of over 1,000 miles to Zungeru, which proved fatal to many of these emaciated creatures, while the change of climate and diet induced ophthalmia, skin diseases, and dysentery. Dr. Parsons, Medical Officer in Bornu, took charge of the Home, and has devoted himself to the work with enthusiasm and success. He has endeavoured to develop character in the inmates, and to inculcate a feeling of independence and a healthy rivalry in industry, so that they may become useful members of the community and liberated in a true sense. The children are taught mat-making, grass-work, pottery, leather and smithy work. Boys who show aptitude are locally apprenticed, but remain on the books of the Home and are regularly inspected. The women and girls make the clothes and nurse the sick and weakly children. The boys are daily drilled by a soldier, and are learning English. In order to make the Home as nearly self-supporting as possible a farm has been started, with 100 acres of land under crops and a few head of cattle and goats for milk, and some poultry. Food is plentiful and good. The buildings at present consist of mud huts. There is daily medical treatment. The Home started with 142. . . . During the year 25 more have been received; total 167. There have been 42 deaths and five women have left of their own accord, leaving 120 at the end of the year. I was much pleased to note at my inspection the general cleanliness and the happy appearance of the inmates."

The High Commissioner has continued to carry out his firm policy against slave-raiding and trading, and while he has not found it practicable as explained in a previous Report) to interfere with domestic slaves who are well treated, the status of slavery is, of course, not recognised. We notice in this Report that in the province of Illorin the Emir asked Sir F. Lugard that the legal right of the Chiefs to their domestic slaves should be recognised, adding that they all knew that *slave-dealing* was illegal. The High Commissioner's reply was that they had seen the British policy for several years and he had no intention of making any change in it.

GENERAL.

Sir F. Lugard's account of his tours and visits to fifteen provinces contains valuable information on the attitude of the people and their chiefs, with whom the High Commissioner was able to interchange views and explain the Government policy. The general result was highly satisfactory; in every capital city Sir F. Lugard writes that he received "spontaneous and grateful recognition of the work of the Resident," while to himself these interviews were "an invaluable education."

The general organisation of the administration has made considerable progress during the year, and the advance of the native chiefs in methods of civilised rule is marked and satisfactory, and makes it possible to carry on the Government with a smaller number of British officers.

It has been necessary to devote much thought and attention to the matter of native taxation. Before the British rule, money was extorted from the subject peoples by wars and raids. The new Government prohibited armed slave-raids and internecine war, and it was urgent, in order to maintain the Fulani, without whom the country could not be effectively governed, as rulers, to assist them to levy fair taxes, and assure a steady revenue to the Government. Sir F. Lugard is of opinion that the security afforded by the new system and the certainty of a fixed payment are "blessings so great that the payment of a reasonable tax falls lightly as their price," while the direct payment of each village through its own chief to the district headman will tend to emancipate the rural population from serfdom and promote a sense of individual and communal responsibility to take the place of slavery as the institution gradually expires."

The system of collecting taxes seems to have been carried out in the different provinces without friction or difficulty.

The British staff is brought into close touch alike with the people and with the native rulers, and relations are being gradually established with the tribes, and control extended throughout the provinces, though this must necessarily be a work of time and of much patience.

The population of the Protectorate is difficult to ascertain with any accuracy, but a rough estimate is submitted which gives a total of 9,161,700, 5,332,990 being females. Sir F. Lugard remarks that it bears "striking witness to the devastation caused by war and slave-raids." In 1854 the population was estimated by Barth at from 30 to 50 millions.

The Government has been able to do but very little in the way of education, through lack of funds. The children in the Freed Slaves' Home are educated as described, and apprentices are being trained in the Public Works Department, etc. But a school is much needed where the sons of chiefs could be taught the English language and English ways, and fitted for their future responsibilities.



Southern Nigeria.

PARLIAMENTARY PAPER.*

THE official report of the Protectorate was published at the end of October.

The amalgamation of this territory with Lagos is shortly to be carried out, and Mr. Walter Egerton, who succeeded Sir Ralph Moor as High Commissioner of Southern Nigeria, received the additional appointment of Governor of Lagos in September, 1904. The territory under control has been enlarged by the creation of seven new districts, and the administrative staff has been therefore increased by about 10 per cent.

"A large proportion of the Protectorate is still unexplored, and in that portion slave-trading and human sacrifice continue, and tribal disputes and wars are of constant occurrence. Hausa traders penetrate far beyond the area under control, but are frequently murdered by the inhabitants."

A considerable number of military expeditions are briefly mentioned as having taken place during the year, their objects being to open up trade routes, to put down native revolts, to punish natives for murderous attacks on white officials and traders, and for closing trade routes. In some cases there is reported to have been "stubborn resistance" which led to "protracted operations," but the losses on the British side seem to have been comparatively small.

The High Commissioner believes the history of the Protectorate to be unique in that while settled Government has only been established throughout the territory by a show of military force, yet the whole cost of introducing and maintaining law and order has been defrayed from the local revenues without incurring any debt. Each year a larger area has been pacified, free trade has been made possible, and a proper system of justice established. The figures of trade and revenue show a continued increase and a steady progress accounted for by the opening up of new country and exploiting of fresh markets.

The people, however, are easy-going and live from hand to mouth—

"a mental attitude which is easily intelligible, although it is discouraging to the Government which aims at the introduction of a civilisation which will undoubtedly make the life of the native more strenuous as it becomes more luxurious."

A recent writer of articles on Southern Nigeria in the *West African Mail*, referring to the question of slavery, says that the institution is mainly a domestic one. The slaves belong in every sense to the family or house, and share the same ancestral rights and privileges as the free-born, with whom they may intermarry. Slaves may attain rank and honours, and all over the country many of the principal chiefs and traders are slaves, or can trace their descent from a slave ancestor.

* Cd. 2684-5.

The common evils of slavery are, however, not altogether absent, for human beings may be seized and sold for sacrificial purposes or for debt, though, now that the power of the dominant Aros is broken, it is hoped that these practices may soon die out.

The East Africa Protectorate.

PARLIAMENTARY PAPER.*

This volume of reports relating to the Administration of the Protectorate was published at the end of October. The chief feature is a review by Mr. Ainsworth, of the Ukamba Province for the last ten years, from July, 1895, when the Foreign Office took over the Protectorate, to February, 1905, and he claims that "really wonderful progress has been made" during this period.

"The country, to start with, was in every way undeveloped: it was inhabited by tribes whose everyday occupation had been for generations one of raiding and killing one another, and enslaving and selling women and youths, and who for some time resented in every possible manner any attempt on our part to bring peace and order into the country. The language and customs were strange and required mastering. There were no roads, and our only base was hundreds of miles from the principal stations. The staff to carry out the work was small: it was, however, persevering and energetic, having a great belief in the future of the country, and worked accordingly.

In 1895 the Government made no material change in the European and native staff left by the Chartered Company. Slave raids had been frequent and caused a constant state of unrest in the country; after the Government took over the protectorate, the occurrence of these raids and native disturbances led to frequent punitive expeditions by the military and police, but since 1897 the natives have caused no further general trouble, and by 1900 a raid within the limits of the province was almost unknown. Organised tribal raids are now said to be unknown. The natives now bring their differences to the civil and criminal courts instead of resorting to raiding and killing, and this progress extends among tens of thousands of the people.

The report contains the following special paragraph on

SLAVERY.

"The primary reason why Great Britain became interested in East Africa was because we wished to put a stop to the slave trade. Our first endeavours

*Africa No. 6 (1905).

were confined to watching the coast with gun-boats and cruisers and arresting slave dhows. This action, however, only had effect so far as the export of slaves was concerned, it in no way interfered with the raiding in the interior.

"The only way, therefore, to deal with the evil was to go to the fountain head, and this was done when the Chartered Company commenced its work in the interior. Of course there are many sources of supply, and this province originally was one of them; but, apart from the supply which was obtained here, the roads to and from Kavirondo and Uganda passed through the country.

"In 1892 a large slave caravan proceeding from Kavirondo to the coast under an Arab named Abdulrehman-bin-Lulu was located at Nzawi, and, on a Chartered Company's officer proceeding there, the slaves were scattered amongst various villages belonging to the Arab's friends, and for some considerable time afterwards we continued to obtain possession of these people and returned them to Kavirondo. On another occasion, in 1894, a large caravan of slaves was surprised in Kitui. The Arabs were arrested and sent to Mombasa for trial, while the slaves, consisting principally of women and children, were returned to their people. On several occasions small trading parties of Arabs and Swahilis were arrested at various places for slaving.

"This sort of trade continued in the Ulu country up till 1894, and in Kitui for some few years longer. During the same time we were continually dealing with Wakamba raids for slaves. These natives continued their raids for some time after we had practically put an end to the Arab and Swahili trading, but in course of time this raiding was absolutely stopped.

"The passage of slaving caravans finally ceased when the railway made progress into the interior, and our occupation of Kitui in 1897 prevented the possibility of slavers using the eastern route to the coast.

"The occupation of the interior and the building of the railway have together been the means of absolutely killing the demand for and supply of slaves in British East Africa. The old slave raids, the slave sticks and slave caravans, are now only memories of "darkest" Africa, and of the days when men hunted and raided men, and drove them like cattle to the coast. Those days have gone, we believe, never to return, and, if the Government had nothing else but this to show as a record of the work performed, many will maintain that it has not failed."

Until a few years ago the principal objects of trade in this country, which was carried on by Arab and Swahili caravans long before the time of the Chartered Company, were ivory, white and "black," but

"Black ivory trading is now absolutely a thing of the past, there is no demand and consequently no supply."

NATIVE LABOUR.

Native labour is absolutely necessary for the development of the land. It is suggested that a Labour Commission should be formed to draw

up a scheme by which the labour in the country should be utilised, and "some equitable form of labour contracts" is proposed.

CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.

Life was held very cheaply before the European occupation of the country, and property could only be held by the stronger. Masai raids for live stock were frequent, and these provoked counter-raids.

"For some time raiding parties were met everywhere; and, with cattle raids, slave raids, internal fighting, etc., the condition of affairs was not what could be called a desirable one. With a settled administration this is all changed, and peace exists in all the districts. . . .

"The physical condition of the people was, however, perhaps better then than it is now.

"The morals of the tribes were never of a high order, but with the advance of civilisation the Masai and the western Wakamba have deteriorated considerably in practically all points of their character which concern their morality.

"With illiterate, almost savage, tribes, it is, of course, a slow process to bring in measures to improve their general conditions, and it is only time that will effect it."

THE UGANDA RAILWAY.

The railway which lies entirely within the East Africa Protectorate is stated to have had "a most wonderful and civilising effect on the country through which it has passed, and to it the province (Ukamba) undoubtedly owes a great deal of its present progressive condition."

The railway generally is paying its way, and "has also proved a blessing to the country by opening it up to civilisation, and proving to the Empire at large that East Africa is a land of fruitful promise."

The country which it traverses contains some of the best sheep-grazing lands in Africa, and these attract white graziers, to whom the railway communication is a necessity. But the Masai object to living between European farms. Consequently a scheme of reserves for the Masai has been put into operation, one in the north and one in the south, as the best way of preserving the Masai race, and avoiding trouble between them and white settlers.

The short reports from the other provinces of the Protectorate mention no disturbances or raiding, except in the case of Kenya, to the north-west, where the Embu people are said to continue to give trouble by raiding their neighbours, and the want of a station near Meru is felt.

In Lamu (which is included in the mainland dominions of the Sultan of Zanzibar) 17 slaves were granted freedom papers during the year.

Sale of Slaves in Tangier.

WE greatly regret to see the following paragraph in the Tangier newspaper *Al Moghreb Al Aksa*, of 28th October :—

“ At a time when public opinion is rightly praising the action of H.M. the Sultan for his recent order that no further public sales of slaves be made in Fez, it is a matter for regret that Tangier has within the past few days been the scene of such sales. The business being stopped here now some years, the broker is careful not to cry out his wares in public, but the poor creatures, dressed up for the occasion, are led quietly from house to house of likely buyers.

“ That Moors should still engage in slavery is no subject for surprise, since this has not yet been abolished in Morocco, but what may be said when the vile traffic is carried on under European protection? On Thursday eight boys ranging in age from six to twelve years were hawked about, and now we are informed that in a Fondak in this city there are four girls awaiting sale. These four girls have been brought to Tangier by the son of a Mazagan Moor who holds a *semsar* certificate, the nationality of which is well known. Need we be surprised at this Mazagan export? ”



Letters of Thomas Clarkson.

In going through some boxes of old letters which have long been kept in the office of the Society, among other correspondence of interest we have come upon a large packet of letters written by the much venerated leader in the anti-slavery fight, who was also the first president of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Thomas Clarkson. The letters, with two exceptions, all belong to the last seven years of the philanthropist's life, when he was living a life of retirement at Playford Hall, Ipswich, where he died in 1846 at the great age of 86. These letters are, therefore, nearly all written after Clarkson had reached four score years; his physical condition was one of extreme feebleness and constant suffering, as these letters show, and his eyesight had almost gone. But his mental vigour remained, and the letters, which are addressed in almost every case to the officers of the Anti-Slavery Society, witness to the continual, unflagging interest which the veteran took in the great subject to which he had devoted his life-work, and the solicitous anxiety with which he followed in detail the work which presented itself to the Society. Indeed it is not too much to say that the frail old man from his country home, must, to a considerable degree, have directed the course of

the Society's policy. His inquiries for information on one or other matter which was occupying the attention of the officials are constant and earnest, but while he is ever ready with counsel and suggestion the writer not seldom urges his correspondents to follow his proposals only so far as they commend themselves to their own judgment, and that of the Committee.

Very striking, in our opinion, is the picture which these letters present of the aged anti-slavery champion, worn by his labours and by illness, and almost blind, not settling down in his last years to the repose which he had so well earned, but still eagerly and with a painful anxiety following every detail of the fight, rejoicing at every advance made, and cut to the heart by every set-back or seeming defeat.

It is a common observation that we have now lost much of the ardour of the anti-slavery spirit which animated Englishmen sixty years ago; certainly the passionate earnestness which is visible in these letters of Clarkson is not now common in the cause.

We propose from time to time to publish in the *Anti-Slavery Reporter* extracts from this correspondence, feeling assured that it is still full of interest and stimulus, though the particular circumstances to which the letters refer have long passed away.

A constant correspondence went on between the New Broad Street office and Ipswich, by the mail coaches, when the time occupied by the journey and the risk involved were far greater than they are now. Thus Clarkson repeatedly asks that his letters shall be acknowledged by return of post, and shows considerable anxiety as to the delivery of papers of importance.

"I shall be sitting as it were upon thorns," he writes in regard to the safe arrival of a certain manuscript, "till I know this, as I put an extraordinary value on it." Such expressions of nervous solicitude are frequent in the letters.

The letters are written in an extremely small, crabbed hand, often difficult to decipher. The writer seems not seldom literally struggling with his physical infirmity to express his thoughts and make clear the proposals which he thinks should be adopted.

The first letter from which we shall quote is one of the earliest of the series.

To J. H. TREDGOLD (*first Secretary of the Anti-Slavery Society*),

PLAYFORD,

May 28, 1839.

Dear Sir,—I am very sorry that the present state of my health will not allow me to come to town to see Captain Huntley's model of a slave-ship, nor

can I promise that I shall ever again visit the Metropolis, *having taken my last leave* of it in my last journey, from which I have but lately with difficulty returned, being now in the eightieth year of my age. But I cannot help thanking Captain Huntley for devising a plan, which may so enlighten the public on this subject, as may spread the execration of the slave trade more widely, and end in its total abolition. The section of the slave-ship *printed* about 48 years ago did wonders for the cause, and this model, being more akin to life, will, I have no doubt, have its influence to the same effect. I hope thousands will see it, and that efforts will be made, great efforts, to obtain spectators. If the members of the Cabinet, or particularly if the Queen, could see the model, I have private reasons for thinking that it might be made particularly useful at this time, or if only Lords Melbourne and Normanby could see it, it would be desirable, but I do not know them. Mr. Buxton knows them well, and could, I think, bring this about, but I believe he is at Cromer at this time.

I am, dear sir,

Yours truly,

THOMAS CLARKSON.

(To be continued).



Native Affairs in Rhodesia.

We learn from the Directors' Report of the British South Africa Company, published at the end of November, that the condition and attitude of the native population are satisfactory in all the provinces. The supply of labour has generally been plentiful, and there is a large increase in the percentage of local natives employed. But they will only engage for short periods. In Southern Rhodesia, extracts are given from reports of the Native Commissioners of Matabeleland and Mashonaland. In the former country we are told that the progress of the natives has been more marked than in any other part of South Africa, owing to the rapid march of civilisation in the Protectorate, the development of the country by means of railways, and the establishment of a fully organised Administration. The natives better appreciate their relation to the Government and recognise that its rule is not a matter of mere brute force. A new Native Pass Ordinance is stated to have been readily complied with by the natives, and an increased tax met with no opposition. They work under better conditions, and provision is made for the proper care of men travelling to labour centres. In Mashonaland the natives do not show much sign of progress, but they have been perfectly peaceful and quiet, in spite of a native rising in Portuguese territory on the northern and eastern borders. The amount of crime is small in proportion to the population. Large numbers of natives from North Eastern Rhodesia have sought work in the southern province. In North Western Rhodesia, to

which has been transferred a considerable area from North Eastern Rhodesia, the inhabitants of the southern and eastern portions are "an agricultural people, who are particularly tractable and law-abiding."

The "Cape to Cairo" Railway is reported to be making rapid progress. Railhead is now 200 miles north of the Victoria Falls, and is expected to reach the eastern frontier of the province in the first half of next year.

The Nile-Red Sea Railway.

THE railway from Berber to Suakin, connecting the Nile with the coast, the formation of which, twenty years ago, was strongly urged upon the Government of the day by the Anti-Slavery Society, has at length become an accomplished fact. A correspondent of *The Times* has written that the last rails of the railway were laid on October 15th, rather sooner than was expected, and on that date "the first train at Halfa performed the through journey and reached Suakin in safety, though at slow speed, as the bridges and the line as a whole have yet to be strengthened to bear a *maximum* strain." The through journey appears to occupy some 30 hours.

It will be remembered that General Gordon considered the construction of this railway a necessity for the Soudan, and Lord Cromer has often emphasised its importance. In his Report on Egypt and the Soudan for 1903, he stated that no serious progress or development could be expected until this railway was built, and no extensions could be undertaken before it was finished.

Slavery in French Colonies.

A ROMAN CATHOLIC missionary, writing to the French Anti-Slavery Society from Bangui in the north-east of French Congo, thus describes slavery in that country:—

"Slavery reigns throughout Africa, and, in spite of the laws that may be made, it will still go on there for a long time; everywhere, too, the slave is the chattel of his master, who can use or abuse him as he pleases. At the same time we must recognise the fact that in certain tribes slavery is comparatively mild, and the slave is treated almost like a member of the family. But here, in the centre of Africa, among the cannibals, we have slavery in its most odious form. It is war, or rather man-hunting, in order to reduce him to slavery. The

savage conqueror seizes as his prey all who have not been able to escape from him. No one gets any quarter from this beast in human shape; there is no more pity for the infant at the breast than for the child of six, seven or ten years old, or for the young man or young woman, for here the master is always sure of a profit on his merchandise. If the slave whom he has seized is good for nothing, if he finds that he cannot make an ample profit out of him, then woe to that slave! his doom is fixed, he will serve as a choice morsel for cannibal palates, and will be slaughtered with as little compunction as a dog would be killed in the village. We need not speak of the poor slaves who disappear at their master's death, but let us not mistake; this barbarous custom is not extinct and is not likely to become so."

A strong Commission has been appointed by the French Colonial Minister to study and report upon the reports of M. de Brazza's mission to French Congo, which have caused so much consternation, and discussion in the French Press.

A large public meeting of protest against the alleged abuses and maladministration was held in Paris early in November when a resolution was unanimously passed calling upon the Government to enforce respect for justice and equity throughout its Colonial domain, and to punish the perpetrators of all crimes committed against the natives.

We referred not long ago in these pages to the insufficiency of the laws against slavery in the French Colony of Senegal, which apparently allow slave dealing to be carried on, under certain circumstances, with impunity. We were glad to see from the statement of the Paris correspondent of the *Morning Leader* that this strange anomaly was to be the subject of an interpellation in the French Parliament by M. Brunet, Senator of the island of Réunion.

It appears that the law of 1831 only provides against maritime slave trade. M. Brunet declared that blacks of all ages and sexes are daily and openly bought and sold throughout European Western Africa. The Governor of the Colony of Senegal is said to have affirmed that nine-tenths of the inhabitants would be amenable to the Assize Court if the Slave Trade Act were applicable on land.

On the general question of the right treatment of subject races we notice some admirable words of M. Pierre Foncin, president of the "Alliance française," quoted in a recent lecture delivered by M. Benito Sylvain in Paris on the black and white races.

"We must choose between two policies—the policy of exploitation, which is lucrative for a time, but is always unjust and soon becomes dangerous—and that other generous and fruitful policy which aims at educating the subject peoples, and progressively associating them with the mother country. For the only possible excuse for white conquest is a duty answering to the right which

it has claimed, and the duty of every country which has subject races is not only to afford them material protection but to undertake their progressive education, to help them to climb one by one the steps of the ladder which we have ourselves scaled since primitive times."

Indian Coolie Emigrants.

In an article which appeared in these pages last year we referred to the attitude of the Anti-Slavery Society towards the indentured labour system, which has always been one of suspicion and distrust. We added, however, that the Society had felt considerable confidence in schemes sanctioned by the Government of India, which is well-known to impose very strict and careful safeguards on all proposals for exporting coolies under indenture from that country, although even their arrangements are not free from the risks attaching to all contract labour.

In an article on "The Coolie Emigrant" in *The Times* of October 2nd, some interesting particulars are given of the action of the Government of India in this matter, which is based upon Acts of the Legislature and rules framed under them. Recruiting is only allowed for countries which satisfy the Indian Government as to the measures taken for the protection, fair payment, food, lodging, and medical attendance of the coolies and for their free return home, if desired, at the end of their term. The utmost vigilance has been exercised, and where the conditions have been broken or evaded, permission to recruit has been withdrawn, as was the case in Réunion and other French colonies. Dutch Guiana is now the only non-British country to which emigration is permitted.

The recruits are brought before the local magistrate, who "does his best to satisfy himself that they clearly understand their destination and the exact terms offered." But this is no easy matter, and it is stated that the recruit probably puts more faith in the picture drawn by the recruiter, who is "generally ignorant and often unscrupulous," than in anything the magistrate may tell him. Herein lies one of the chief objections to the contract labour system, that it is impossible to convey to the ignorant mind of the coolie a fair idea of the labour to which he is binding himself, and this objection is not removed by the reply that he is well treated when he gets to his work.

The Indian coolie is generally recognised as a most peaceful and law-abiding citizen, and is easily controlled. He is encouraged to settle down and trade on his own account in British Guiana and Trinidad, but in Natal there is a strong feeling against him, and he has to suffer various disabilities if he stays on as a trader in the colony.

The total number of coolies who left India in 10 years was 177,000, of whom 33,000 were employed on the Uganda Railway.

The Race Question in America.

IN the course of his recent tour in the Southern States, the President of the United States visited the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, of which Dr. Booker Washington is the well-known head. Dr. Washington's policy of training the coloured people on industrial lines has been one of marked success, and President Roosevelt is known to regard his work with special favour and interest. The President addressed the students of the Tuskegee Institute and exhorted them to set an example of soberness and industry, and to war against crime, especially against crime committed by men of their own race. He urged the holding of a conference between decent cool-headed whites and blacks as the best remedy for misunderstandings when they arose. The hope of the advancement of the negro in the south, Mr. Roosevelt continued, lies in an effort being made to improve his moral and material condition and to work in harmony with the white man in building up a commonwealth. The future of the south depends on both races living up to the spirit and the letter of the laws and working out the destinies of both, not as races, but as law-abiding Americans.

In a speech the next day at Little Rock, Arkansas, the President referred to the same subject and the importance of avoiding antagonisms between classes. Speaking of the negro criminal he said that to avenge a hideous crime by another reduced the avenger to a bestial level. It was a duty that all in authority owed to the people to drive out the reproach and menace of lynch law.

It has been stated that no Tuskegee graduate has ever been convicted of crime.

Obituary.

WE regret to report the death, on November 15th, of a member of the Committee of the Society, Mr. JOSEPH BEVAN BRAITHWAITE, at the age of 87. Mr. Braithwaite, who was by profession a barrister, was a member of the Society of Friends, and a strong supporter of the Bible Society. He joined the Committee of the Anti-Slavery Society, in 1888, but of late years has been prevented from attending its meetings.

Resignation.

MR. DANIEL HACK has felt compelled to resign his membership of the Committee of the Society, on account of inability to attend its meetings, as he is now seldom able to be in London.